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582 583 836 [415] [482] the carrying-net, as much as possible. On the way home he will not assist her to place the *yica* in position. She must seat herself in order to place the band round her forehead and then rise unaided. They then proceed homewards. If the girl has been unable to adjust the yica or to carry it home in one stretch, the man will leave her the same afternoon. A strong and industrious man is not suited to a lazy wife, and vice versa.

581 584 It was definitely maintained that even a strong passion was not sufficient to keep a pair together. Even though the initial choice—made by the girl—was primarily based on affection, the second choice—in which both parties and their parents participate—is the decisive one, and this is based on a number of sensible considerations of an economic and social nature. Here it is particularly the girl's father who plays the decisive part, but as a rule he allows his view to be signified to the daughter through the mother. The girl can flout her parents' advice and marry as she likes, but this type of marriage is not regarded as durable. Normally she follows the advice, and there were times when a father requested a young man to abstain from visiting his daughter. The motives responsible for this appear primarily to be of an economic character. The girl's parents desire an able fisher and hunter as their son-in-law for—with the prevalent matrilocality [591] —they will be very dependent upon a son-in-law's ability to provide.

581 [577] [684] In earlier days bravery in war was considered to be an equally important factor, but this is no longer the case as the need for it has disappeared. On the other hand the girl's father considers it important that the son-in-law should possess a balanced temperament. Irascibility is deemed to be a great vice, in Mataco eyes perhaps the greatest, and, leads for example, in cases of infidelity straight to homicide and blood feuds between the families. In addition it was 582 considered a bad thing to marry into your own band. It was never explained as a ban or incest, but rather as a foolish disposition, because one lost the advantage of having another band, *nikyi*, to rely upon in case of controversial questions. This natural need for strength has caused the Mataco to prefer band-exogamy, and, for example, in the village Yuto on the Río Pilcomayo, 81 out 88 controlled marriages were exogamous. This system is also considered advantageous by the young men, for even though they stood alone as a stranger in the daily life of their wife's family, they realized that both they and their children might stand in need of aid from another, powerful band. Much suggests that the Mataco bands were formally more locally bound, so that a village consisted in principle 621 178 of one or two bands plus foreign males-in-law, and one still often sees strangers, [584] young men and girls, come to a village dancing-place in order to seek a sweetheart. Nowadays, however, it is quite easy to find a suitable partner within one's own village because many different bands are now represented there. This mixing is particularly due to the general dispersal of local groups that took place during [595] the Chaco war of the thirties, and a later coming together under the care of the British evangelical mission in accordance with quite different principles. Formerly

583 this will not influence her choice and that of her parents. An abortion will be
581 produced artificially should the man prove to be inacceptable. Should the girl
847 prove to be pregnant at a time when she has started a new, more stable, relation, the new young man will demand that she aborts.

585 Thus the consummation of the marriage, the creation of a family, is, for the
591 Mataco, identical with the commencement of a completely valid marriage. As a rule the family moves shortly after the birth to its own hut, though still near
[178] the girl's parents. Village matrilocality is permanent, and until about 40 years
[342] ago, when communal houses were still the most common, the sharing of a hut with the wife's family for a whole lifetime, was the rule.

593 Already in connexion with her initiation each girl is given certain advice by
[881] her mother concerning the proper behaviour as a married person. The mother
[867] will tell her, for example, that she must treat her coming in-laws as though they
[606] were her own parents and that she must always be generous when it is a matter of sharing food with them. She will also counsel the girl to show respect to her future husband, fetching fuel, for example, when he is away fishing, and ensuring that there is plenty of water for him when he returns from hunting. Willingness to cooperate and mutual respect are very typical of the relations between man and wife. The man's position in marriage is formally the same. He must regard his
[606] wife's parents as his own, must be generous to them, though in fact they do not treat him with the same indulgence they would show a son. In any conflict that may arise they side with the daughter against the husband. Should he not be sufficiently industrious he will be sent out to fish or hunt, and if unsuccessful he will be reproached, something that no Mataco would do to a son. If a man quarrels with his mother-in-law he is chased away. His happiness depends to a high degree upon an equable temperament and ability to obtain food. But as his wife will
[476] always share his bag with relations and friends, and because matrilocality prevails, the wife's family will always obtain the lion's share of what he brings back.

606 The position of a son-in-law as a stranger in another band also raises difficulties
609 for him. In case of dispute his wife's family or other local people will be able to say: "We don't know him and don't trust him". Perhaps he has no kin in the village to vouch for him and give him assistance. The position of a son-in-law can thus be compared to that of a stranger in a big city, irresponsible because he is unknown, and overlooked for that reason.

593 The mutual relations of married couples are naturally stamped by matrilo-
[554] cality and the woman's very considerable occupational effort, which together give the wife a good social position in relation to her husband. In the meantime it is more through the wife's family that this status is manifested. As between the sexes the husband still dominates. As a rule it is the husband who has the say,
[182] but it is often the woman who decides what is to be said. The latent tension between family and sex results in a curiously unintegrated behaviour. By day a man and wife behave almost like strangers to each other. They are extremely terse

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586 [577] Laziness and incompetence are other things that often lead to divorce. If it is the woman who justly is accused of these faults she can be forced out of the house and her parents will take no counter steps. If in such circumstances there are small children in the marriage, she may be allowed to take them, but if the husband continues to send them small gifts and food he retains the right to them and gets them back at an age of 5–6, as they belong to his band. If, on the other hand, he fails to show them any attention, he loses them and may not even be allowed to play with them. Should it be the man who is lazy, his wife makes no mention of it but her parents become angry with him. One day when the man is out seeking food, the parents exhort their daughter to hide herself with some family. When the husband returns home he discovers what is going on without his in-laws saying anything to him. He also says nothing, but begins to collect his things together. He will not leave the house until nightfall, unseen, because he is ashamed, and then return to his family. It is said that this custom was far more widespread [178] a generation ago than it is now. Several women, with a smile, expressed their relief at this as "they would never manage to have any fun out of a man before he was kicked out by his in-laws, for nowadays all men are lazy".

[842] The third—and last—cause of divorce socially recognized is: childless marriages. It is always the woman who is considered to be sterile, and consequently the man who takes the initiative for divorce. However, in such cases it is he who leaves the house, presumably because he has already sought contact with a possible [587] new wife. His sister may help him to get into touch with one of her friends and let them meet secretly in the forest to discover whether they like each other. The man thus leaves the house as he falls under the rule governing unfaithful husband, and not because his wife is sterile.

[587] [589] Whatever the reason for a Mataco divorce, it is always a heavy blow, both morally and economically, for the spouse that is left. The economic loss can only be made good by re-marriage, and this nearly always takes place. Unmarried persons are reduced to living partly on the bounty of the family as occupations are so sharply divided according to sex.

762 A person who feels himself rejected or a victim of unhappy love sometimes commits suicide, which with the Mataco appears to occur particularly in this connexion and is always done in the same manner. The unfortunate one goes [278] alone into the forest and collects the very poisonous fruit of the *sacha sandia* (Capparis salicifolia), which the Indian then cooks lightly and eats. After a few hours when no remedy is possible, the Indian returns home and lies down to sleep. [682] Death comes very shortly. In cases of suicide the spouse of the dead person will always be pointed to as the one responsible. In consequence, the family of the dead person will in many cases start a campaign against that of the spouse to obtain blood vengeance or, more probably, to secure economic compensation.

182 684 628 According to Mataco unwritten law infidelity is severely punished by the loss of home and children. This should occasion no surprise, for adultery, on account

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762 the victim awaits death. It is said that some men take poison to blackmail a woman into complying with their wishes.

It has been noticed time and again that only young people eat sachasandia as a rule. Among the cases cited above there is only one of an elderly woman who attempted to take her life. In this connection, the question arises of whether suicides are more common among women than among men. No data on this point have been gathered, but it is the impression of the missionaries that suicide is equally common among men and women with perhaps a slight majority among women. The first problem raised by the frequency of these suicides is whether the suicides are caused by new conditions of life —by culture clash and lack, of adjustment to a new world— or whether they were equally frequent formerly when the native culture still functioned? Since no Matako group now lives in its earlier surroundings, the truth of the matter will be difficult to learn. If the problem is presented to the missionaries who are largely responsible for the disappearance of the Indian culture, they always insist that suicides were one of the worst manifestations of the culture before the Indians were saved. They point out, moreover, that the number of suicides was particularly high at the time when the missionaries began their work in the region, and they establish a close relation between suicide and dancing. One of the missionaries wrote to me: "In the old days when the Indians were still dancing, there used to be as many as a dozen attempted suicides in one day, resulting in my being up most of the night going from one to another. They were so many and so frequent, however, and it happened so long ago that I can remember none in detail". This evidence is confirmed by other missionaries who recall that the worst epidemics always occured in connection with the night dances which have a decidedly sexual character. At such times young married men who took part in the entertainments slept with girls, thus arousing the jealousy of their wives and the anger of their mothers-in law. If as a result one or two people committed suicide, others would follow their example.

762 178 ● 762 535 178 [797] [837]

The link established between night dances and suicide was the main reason for the strict tabu against dancing which is now enforced in every mission. Indians have been made so aware of the evil of dancing that even little girls have been kept from their normal and charming jumping about. Missionaries, however, are not responsible for this measuré; it has been self-imposed by the Indians.

No cases of suicide are known among other tribes who live in the same region and under similar conditions. At any rate, I have never

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